

REMARKS

The present application was filed on June 6, 2000, with claims 1-19. Claims 1-19 are currently pending in the application. Claims 1, 10 and 19 are the independent claims.

Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration of the present application in view of the amendments above and the remarks which follow.

Applicant initially notes that the Examiner has not returned an initialed copy of one of the three PTO-1449 forms filed in the present application. Applicant filed an Information Disclosure Statement on June 6, 2000, with a corresponding PTO-1449 form. To date, Applicant has not received an initialed return copy of this particular PTO-1449 form. Accordingly, Applicant has attached a copy of this PTO-1449 form, and requests that the Examiner return an initialed copy to indicate that the cited references have been made of record.

Independent claims 1, 10 and 19 stand rejected under §102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,781,535 (hereinafter “Russ”). In this response, each of these claims has been amended to more clearly set forth the subject matter which Applicant regards as the invention. For example, independent claim 1 has been amended to specify that certain network elements are coupled, either directly or via other network elements, to respective first and second dual-homed network elements of a set of dual-homed network elements. Similar amendments have been made to independent claims 10 and 19. Examples of such arrangements may be seen in the dual-homing approaches of FIGS. 2, 3, 7 and 8 and the associated text in the specification.

As a more particular illustration, FIG. 2 shows an arrangement in which the “second network element” of claim 1 may correspond to network element 15-2, which in this embodiment is directly coupled to a dual-homed network element 16-2 in a set 16 of dual-homed network elements. At element 15-2, a copy of a signal from NE-A is dropped, and the signal continues on to element 15-3. Element 15-3 in this example may be viewed as the “given network element corresponding to said at least one additional network element” and is directly coupled to a second dual-homed network element of the set of dual-homed network elements 16, namely, dual-homed network element 16-1. See the specification at, for example, page 5, lines 11-21. The claims as amended similarly cover the multi-ring dual-homing approach of FIG. 3, the dual-homing approach with mesh-type transport

and a multidrop mechanism as in FIG. 7, the dual-homing approach with mesh-type transport and a multicast mechanism as in FIG. 8, as well as other arrangements.

The Russ reference, taken alone or in conjunction with the other art of record, fails to disclose or suggest the present invention as set forth in the amended claims.

Applicant therefore respectfully submits that independent claims 1, 10 and 19 as amended are allowable over Russ.

Dependent claims 2-9 and 11-18 are believed allowable for at least the reasons identified with regard to their respective independent claims, and are also believed to define separately-patentable subject matter.

In view of the above, Applicant believes that claims 1-19 as amended are in condition for allowance, and respectfully requests withdrawal of the §102(e) and §103(a) rejections.

Respectfully submitted,



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Enclosure(s): PTO-1449 Form